

Message Text

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FM AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1389

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COMUSFORAZ

USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L PONTA DELGADA 41

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT PO

SUB: AZOREAN DEVELOPMENTS: CONVERSATIONS WITH REGIONAL JUNTA
MEMBER MONJARDINO

REGIONAL JUNTA MEMBER ALVARO MONJARDINO SAID HE WAS PLEASED WITH THE
NEW VERSION OF THE DECREE LAW ON THE JUNTA BUT UNHAPPY THAT AZOREANS
HAD HAD TO USE BLACKMAIL TO GET IT. THE NEW LAW GRANTS THE JUNTA THE

SAME POWER ENJOYED BY MINISTERS IN ALL SECTORS CURRENTLY UNDER
JUNTA JURISDICTION AND GIVES THE JUNTA A VOICE IN ALL DECISIONS
AFFECTING THE AZORES. IN ADDITION, THE JUNTA
WILL HAVE THE AUTHORITY TO ESTABLISH A PLANNING
UNIT AND TO DRAW UP ITS OWN BUDGET FOR SUBMISSION TO THE GOP. THE LAW
SPECIFICALLY EXEMPTS FROM JUNTA AUTHORITY INTER ALIA, MONETARY AND
FISCAL POLICY, DEFENSE AND SECURITY, JUSTICE AND FORIEGN AFFAIRS.
MONJARDINO WAS PARTICULARLY PLEASED THAT THE NEW LAW WILL BE EFFECTIVE

UNTIL APPROVAL OF THE STATUTE OF AUTONOMY. THIS MEANS THAT
APPROVAL OF THE STATUTE NEED NOT AWAIT COMPLETION OF THE CONSTITUTION.

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2. MONJARDINO NOTED THAT THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL RECENTLY APPROVED A

STATUTE FOR MACOAU AND SAID HE HAD ALREADY EXPLORED WITH A COUNCIL MEMBER THE POSSIBILITY OF EARLY COUNCIL APPROVAL OF THE AZOREAN STATUTE. COUNCIL APPROVAL OF THE STATUTE WOULD GIVE IT THE FORCE OF CONSTITUTIONAL LAW, AND WOULD AVOID THE NEED TO WAIT FOR THE CONSTITUTENT ASSEMBLY TO FINISH ITS WORK.

3. MONJARDINO SAID HE RAISED WITH THE GOP THE AZOREAN DEMAND TO HAVE A SIGNIFICANT VOICE IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS WHICH AFFECT THE ARCHIPELAGO THE IDEA WAS NOT WELL RECEIVED.

4. MONJARDINO WAS CRITICAL OF WHAT HE SAW AS THE GOP INTENTION TO USE THE AZORES AS A FARM TO PRODUCE MEAT AND MILK CURRENTLY IN SHORT SUPPLY ON THE CONTINENT. HE EMPHASIZED THE NEED FOR INVESTMENT WHICH WOULD PROMOTE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, BUT WAS PESSIMISTIC ABOUT THE POSSIBILITIES OF GETTING THE NEEDED FUNDS FROM THE GOP.

5. COMMENT: THE NEW DECREE LAW WHENV PROMULATED WILL GIVE THE AZORES REAL AUTONOMY. IT IS SIGNIFICANT THAT THE LAW ESTABLISHES THE PRINCIPLE THAT THE AZOREAN GOVERNMENT HAS A VOICE IN ALL GOP DECISIONS AFFECTING THE ARCHIPELAGO, AND IN VIEW OF AZOREANS, A VOICE IN BASE NEGOTIATIONS. MONJARDINO'S CONCERN ABOUT THE ECONOMIC SITUATION REFLECTS THE VIEW OF THE AVERAGE AZOREAN. TODAY THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR BEHIND THE AUTONOMY AND INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENTS IS PROBABLY THE FEAR THAT ECONOMIC CRISES ON THE CONTINENT WILL ENGULF THE AZORES WHICH HAVE SO FAR BEEN SPARED THE BRUNT OF THE CRISES.
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